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how can I help my child to obey?

"Why won't he do as he's told?" Parents have asked this question for years and will probably go right on doing so, for disobedience is part of growing up. Of course it's maddening to be forever reminding, prodding, and scolding. But often a child "disobeys" because he is too interested in what he's doing. He



seldom means to annoy. It's his way of beginning to stand on his own feet. Also, he's often just too busy to remember such dull routines like washing before meals, coming home on time, putting toys away, and so on. *All parents have some difficulty getting their child to obey.* The self-control that is needed for obedience develops slowly. But, of course, blind obedience isn't what we want. It's *self-discipline*, responsibility and a feeling of self-respect that we want him to achieve. Here are some well-tested methods you may find useful.

Expect Obedience. When you ask your child to do something, act as if you *expected* him to do it. By expecting co-operation you are more likely to get it.

"More Flies are Caught with Honey". Try to ask and not order. Asking invites co-operation and works much better. Ordering only "gets his back up".

Keep Your Temper. The surest way to make him balky or sullen is to be always losing your temper. Either he'll lose his too, or learn to bear a grudge.

Not Too Many Rules. Though they won't admit, children want and need rules. It helps them to know where they stand. Rules should be few, simple and straight forward. And, since Johnnie or Mary have to follow the rules, it's only fair that they should have a say in setting them. But, once made, they should be kept. If you are lax one day and strict the next, you can't blame Junior for not paying attention since he never knows when you really mean it.

Bribing and Coaxing. Avoid appeals of this kind. Going to the store or running errands is part of his share of the household tasks. Doing it "for a nickle" is a bribe. Needed pocket money is much better given through a regular weekly allowance. "Do this for mother's sake" is coaxing which admits weakness. It is an unfair appeal to the child's sympathy. Besides, he will soon tire of it.

Give Him Help. Routine tasks can be dull and uninteresting. Giving him a little help can often avoid unpleasant nagging.



Proper Warning. Young children have little understanding of time. If given reminders, they are more apt to be prompt. When father calls "Lights out in ten minutes!" little Freddie has a chance to finish that last page or chapter.

"Like Father—Like Son". This old saying speaks for itself. Besides being born mimics, children *depend* on their parents to set the example.



but he still won't obey!

There are always times when more drastic action is needed. Patience, affection, and understanding just won't always seem to work. What then? First, look for the cause. Perhaps something unusual has upset him, or he is overtired.